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SRP

Happy Thanksgiving

from your friend

John









9/23/2004 12:43:40 PM



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Museum gains momentum

Gravity Railroad to be celebrated in Carbondale

BY DANA DESTEFANO
STAFF WRITER

CARBONDALE — Dr. S. Robert Powell has been working on the railroad — and it's been closed since 1901.

Years of waiting patiently and persevering will finally pay off when construction begins later this summer to renovate the third floor of Carbondale City Hall into the Delaware and Hudson Gravity Railroad museum.

A \$115,000 enhancement grant from the state Department of Transportation, awarded in 2004, will cover the cost of everything from electrical rewiring to making display cases.

"The Delaware and Hudson Gravity Railroad was the first commercially successful railroad in America," Dr. Powell said. "And it was right here in Carbondale."

PennDOT is funding the construction of the museum and renovations to the third floor of City Hall, but the Carbondale Historical Society needed additional funding for the pre-design phase of the program. The Lackawanna Heritage Valley Authority put up \$7,500, which the city matched.



JOHNSON BACHMAN / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Dr. S. Robert Powell, of the Carbondale Historical Society, holds a wooden wheelbarrow wheel from the Delaware and Hudson Gravity Railroad dating to the early 19th century. It will be part of a third-floor museum at Carbondale City Hall.

Spring, 2006

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LINDA MORGAN/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Dr. S. Robert Powell, executive director of the Carbondale Historical Society, looks at railroad maps in the newly renovated third floor of Carbondale City Hall, which houses the Delaware & Hudson Coal Co. Gravity Railroad Museum.

A RAIL TRIP BACK IN TIME

Renovations are nearly complete on Carbondale Historical Society's museum

BY DANA DeSTEFANO
STAFF WRITER

CARBONDALE —Visitors to the third floor of City Hall soon will be transported back to the days when railroads were the height of transportation.

Renovations to the Carbondale Historical Society's Delaware & Hudson Coal Co. Gravity Railroad Museum are nearing completion, and Dr. S. Robert Powell, the society's director, hopes to begin welcoming visitors to its space in the municipal building next month.

Renovations began in July and are about 70 percent complete. A \$115,000 grant from the state Department of Transportation covered the cost of restoring the original woodwork, windows and construction of cabinets and display cases in the railroad's

19th century style.

Dr. Powell said the society is planning a Sunday afternoon open house reception in November in conjunction with another historical society project involving the installation of portraits of each of the city's mayors in Council Chambers.

"No displays will be in place yet because we want everyone to see the museum space," Dr. Powell said. "We want people to enjoy and appreciate the exhibition space and the restoration that was done."

The Delaware & Hudson Coal Co. constructed the original 16-mile gravity railroad in 1829 to transport coal through the Moosic Mountains. It ran from Carbondale to Honesdale and was the first successful commercial railroad in the country.

Meanwhile, Dr. Powell is

eager to develop the museum's first exhibition, but with an abundance of artifacts in the possession of the Historical Society, he has some difficult choices to make.

"We recently acquired some very valuable mining maps," he said. "These were maps of the underground that miners used to find their way through what was essentially an underground city."

Other artifacts on hand include original mining supplies, railroad maps, period clothing, books and household items from 19th century Carbondale.

"We have an almost constant stream of things coming into our collection," he said.

Dr. Powell hopes to change exhibits periodically, as most of the society's collection includes items from the same era as the Delaware & Hudson

railroad. By using volunteers, he hopes to keep the museum open at least 20 hours a week now, and 40 hours a week when enough staff is available.

"There are several lifetimes worth of stuff to display here," he said. "The history of the upper Lackawanna Valley began here ... it's very exciting to be a part of it."

Dr. Powell hopes the museum will eventually become a destination for visitors. Each time a Steamtown excursion arrives in Carbondale, he makes it a point to be there to greet the train and escort passengers to historical points of interest in the city.

"We see it as a site for visitors, but it also serves an educational function," he said. "We hope to welcome school groups and teach children the history of the area."

Contact the writer:
ddestefano@timeshamrock.com











Carbondale News

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570-282-3300

Historical Society offers display of Psanky egg collections

An exhibition of what are popularly called *psanky*, or hand decorated Easter eggs, opens to the public in the Carbondale Historical Society museum on the third floor of City Hall Wednesday, April 8, 7-9 p.m.

The eggs are from the collections of Joseph Pascoe of Carbondale and James Burke of Chubb, Mr. Pascoe's collection includes several eggs that were presented to him as gifts by the late Paul and Olga Dzwibak of Carbondale and George Tondan of Chubb.

According to Dr. S. Robert Powell, president of the Carbondale Historical Society, it is possible in a Ukrainian Easter egg. Many other eastern European groups, including the Rumanians, Bulgarians, Serbs, Czechs, Lithuanians, Poles, Slovenians, Slovaks, and Slovaks, also decorate eggs in a similar manner for Easter. The word comes from the verb "psaty," meaning "to write," as the



Carbondale Historical Society curators Dr. S. Robert Powell, left, and Joseph Pascoe, organize a display of Easter psanky eggs. (JW/WS photo by Tom Fornace)

designs are not painted on, but written with a stylus or a pin-head with brown ink. The eggs are decorated using a wax-resist-

ant, or batik, method of decoration. Wooden eggs and broiled eggs are often referred to as *psanky* because they mimic the



decorative style of psanky.

Psanky, which are intended to be decorative and not edible, are made with raw eggs, the egg yolk and white being either allowed to dry up over time, or removed by blowing them out through a small hole in the egg.

Dr. Powell explained that, over many ancient cultures, the Christians worshipped a sun god who warmed the earth and was regarded as a source of life. Eggs decorated with nature symbols became an integral part of spring rituals, serving as benevolent

symbols and representing the rebirth of the earth.

"With the advent of Christianity," Dr. Powell said, "the connotations of the egg changed to represent not nature's rebirth, but the rebirth of man. Christians embraced the egg as a symbol and likened it to the tomb from which Christ rose."

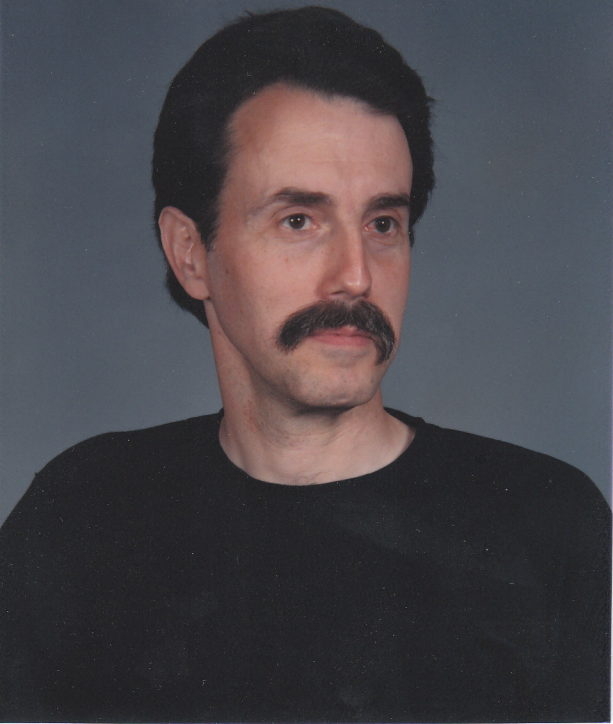
This free, special exhibition of psanky will be open again to the public on April 14, 15, 21, and 22, 1 to 4 p.m., and 7 to 9 p.m.

For additional information, contact the Historical Society at 282-0386.



SCOUTS TOUR HISTORICAL SOCIETY — Dr. S. Robert Powell (back, right), executive director of the Carbondale Historical Society, recently took the cub scouts of Pack 90, New Milford, on a tour of the

Society to view its various exhibits, artifacts and collections. The tour was co-hosted by Boy Scout Troop 2001 of Whites Crossing. (NEWS photo by Tom Flannery)

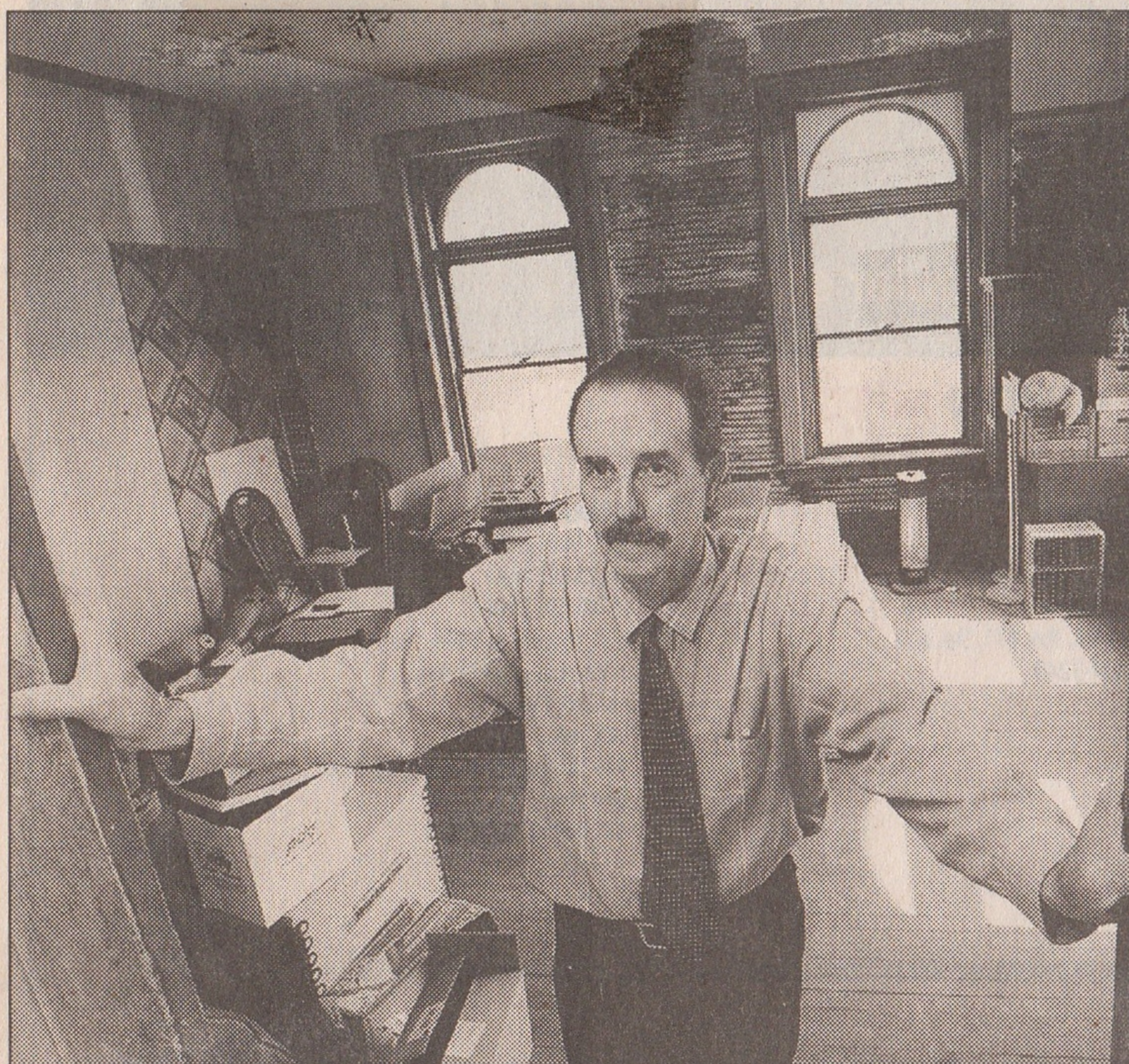


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JULY 18, 2004



MICHAEL J. MULLEN / THE SUNDAY TIMES

Dr. S. Robert Powell stands at the doorway of part of the Carbondale Historical Society and Museum on the third floor of Carbondale City Hall.

Carbondale Hosts

Museum in City Hall preserves piece of city's history.

BY DAVID PALFREY
THE SUNDAY TIMES

CARBONDALE — Visitors to the third floor of City Hall don't just go up. They go back in time.

The third floor is home to the Carbondale Historical Society and part of its impressive collection of railroad and other artifacts.

A project to restore and adapt two rooms and a hallway into a museum highlighting the Delaware & Hudson Railroad should enhance the space's historical aura.

It is being funded by \$130,000 in grants obtained with help of the city and the Lackawanna Heritage Valley

Authority. The latter two organizations each provided half of the \$15,000 in matching funds needed for the larger \$115,000 federal Transportation Enhancement Act grant.

"It will preserve a key piece of Carbondale's history ... and better yet, it's right here in City Hall," Mayor Justin Taylor said.

The society's president remembers the later part of the area's railroading heyday.

"When I was child (in the 1940s and 1950s), the railroads were very active," recalled city native S. Robert Powell, Ph.D., a retired professor.

"In going to school in Simpson, we rode the bus from Finch Hill down Route 106 through Carbondale and up Belmont Street. The big game always seemed to be if we could get through without being stopped by a train."















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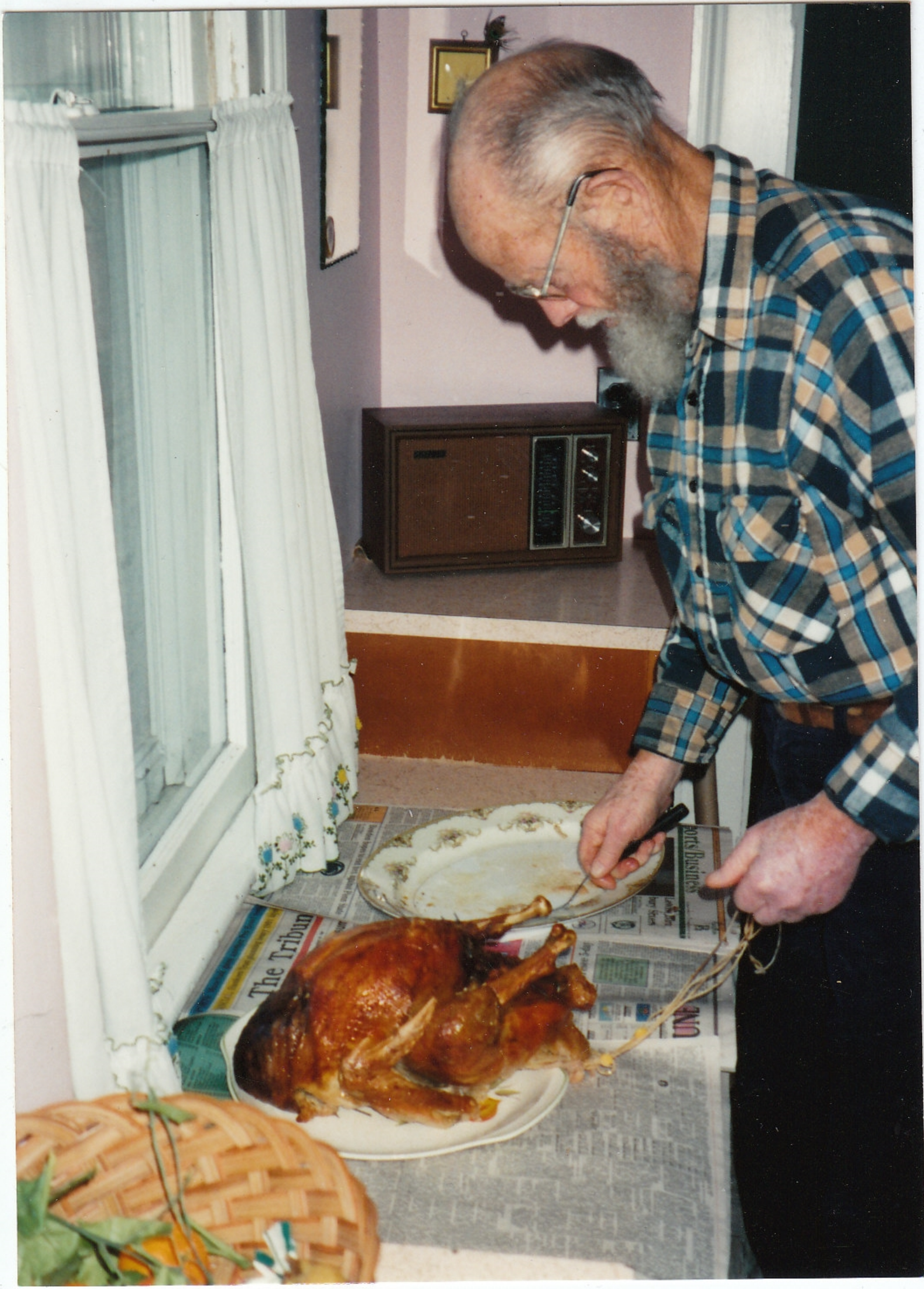
























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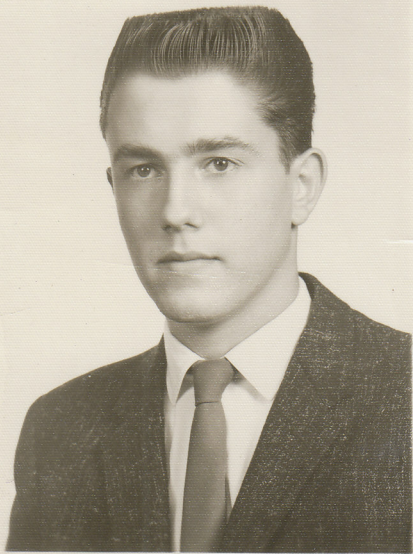
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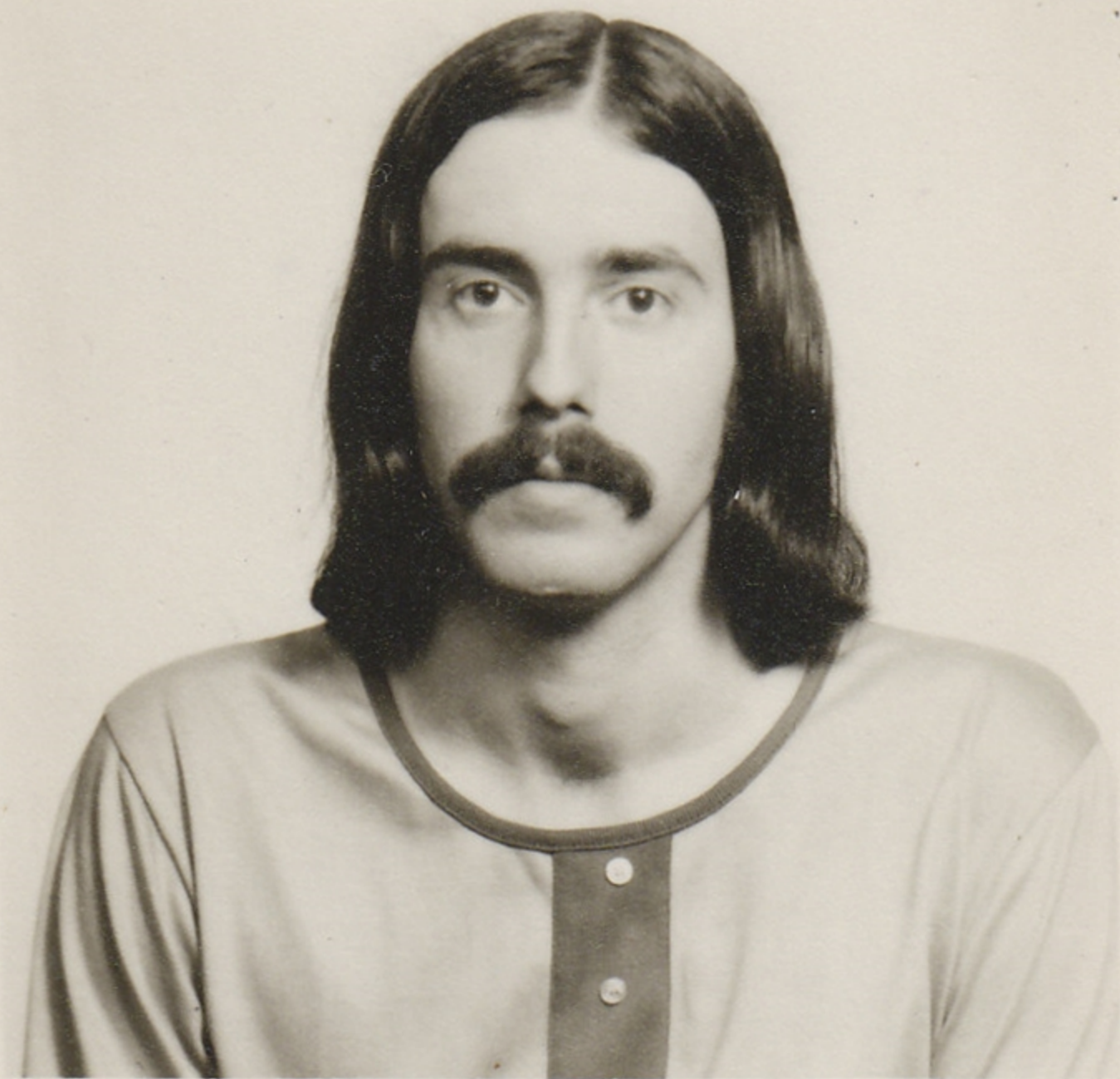




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